

Energy Tips – Steam

Steam Tip Sheet #12 • January 2006

Industrial Technologies Program



Suggested Actions

Determine the potential for high-pressure condensate flashing by completing a plant survey that:

- Identifies all sources of high-pressure condensate.
- Determines condensate flow and duration, as well as the heat recovery potential due to flashed steam production.
- Identifies compatible uses for low-pressure steam.
- Estimates the cost effectiveness of installing appropriate heat-recovery devices and interconnecting piping.

Resources

U.S. Department of Energy—DOE's software, the *Steam System Assessment Tool* and *Steam System Scoping Tool*, can help you evaluate and identify steam system improvements. In addition, refer to *Improving Steam System Performance: A Sourcebook for Industry* for more information on steam system efficiency opportunities.

Visit the BestPractices Web site at www.eere.energy.gov/industry/bestpractices to access these and many other industrial efficiency resources and information on training.

Flash High-Pressure Condensate to Regenerate Low-Pressure Steam

Low-pressure process steam requirements are usually met by throttling high-pressure steam, but a portion of the process requirements can be achieved at low cost by flashing high-pressure condensate. Flashing is particularly attractive when it is not economically feasible to return the high-pressure condensate to the boiler. In the table below, the quantity of steam obtained per pound of condensate flashed is given as a function of both condensate and steam pressures.

High-Pressure Condensate Flashing				
High-Pressure Condensate, psig	Percent of Condensate Flashed, lb steam/lb condensate			
	Low-Pressure Steam, psig			
	50	30	15	5
200	10.4	12.8	15.2	17.3
150	7.8	10.3	12.7	14.9
100	4.6	7.1	9.6	11.8
75	2.5	5.1	7.6	9.9

Example

In a plant where the cost of steam is \$10.00 per million Btu (\$10.00/MMBtu), saturated steam at 150 pounds per square inch gauge (psig) is generated, and a portion of it throttled to supply 30-psig steam. Assuming continuous operation, determine the annual energy savings of producing low-pressure steam by flashing 5,000 pounds per hour (lb/hr) of 150-psig condensate. The average temperature of the boiler makeup water is 70°F.

From the table above, when 150-psig condensate is flashed at 30 psig, 10.3% of the condensate vaporizes.

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Low-Pressure Steam Produced} &= 5,000 \text{ lb/hr} \times 0.103 \\ &= \mathbf{515 \text{ lb/hr}}\end{aligned}$$

From the ASME Steam Tables, the enthalpy values are:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{For 30-psig saturated steam} &= 1,171.9 \text{ Btu/lb} \\ \text{For 70°F makeup water} &= 38.0 \text{ Btu/lb}\end{aligned}$$

Annual savings are obtained as follows:

$$\begin{aligned}\text{Annual Savings} &= [515 \text{ lb/hr} \times (1,171.9 - 38.0) \text{ Btu/lb} \times 8,760 \text{ hr/yr} \times \\ &\quad \$10.00/\text{MMBtu}] / 10^6 \text{ Btu/MMBtu} \\ &= \mathbf{\$51,155}\end{aligned}$$



U.S. Department of Energy
Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy

Bringing you a prosperous future where energy is clean, abundant, reliable, and affordable

Proximity Is a Plus

The source of high-pressure condensate should be relatively close to the low-pressure steam header to minimize piping and insulation costs.

Match Availability and Use

The economics of heat recovery projects are most favorable when the waste steam heat content is high and the flow is continuous. Seasonal space heating is not the most desirable end use.

Adapted from an Energy TIPS fact sheet that was originally published by the Industrial Energy Extension Service of Georgia Tech.

BestPractices is part of the Industrial Technologies Program Industries of the Future strategy, which helps the country's most energy-intensive industries improve their competitiveness. BestPractices brings together emerging technologies and best energy-management practices to help companies begin improving energy efficiency, environmental performance, and productivity right now.

BestPractices emphasizes plant systems, where significant efficiency improvements and savings can be achieved. Industry gains easy access to near-term and long-term solutions for improving the performance of motor, steam, compressed air, and process heating systems. In addition, the Industrial Assessment Centers provide comprehensive industrial energy evaluations to small- and medium-size manufacturers.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

EERE Information Center
1-877-EERE-INF
(1-877-337-3463)
www.eere.energy.gov

Industrial Technologies Program
Energy Efficiency
and Renewable Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585-0121
www.eere.energy.gov/industry

A STRONG ENERGY PORTFOLIO FOR A STRONG AMERICA

Energy efficiency and clean, renewable energy will mean a stronger economy, a cleaner environment, and greater energy independence for America. Working with a wide array of state, community, industry, and university partners, the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy invests in a diverse portfolio of energy technologies.

DOE/GO-102006-2257
January 2006
Steam Tip Sheet #12

Revised from DOE/GO-102001-1275 • May 2001